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implements were spears and javelins. These were usually made with iron heads either of small bayonet-shape or elongated elipse-shape sharpened to a point. In the case of the larger spears the head measures about two feet in length and two or three inches across at the widest part of the blade. The shaft of some hard wood is five or six feet long.

The *Karen Thesaurus* distinguishes among three kinds of swords or "na," as they are collectively called by the people themselves. One kind is the two-edged sword with a sharp point ("na thweh hko"); the second is a blunt sword shaped like the tail of an eel ("na nya hti meh"), and the third is square at the end and can be used for cutting only ("na xu hko").[3] These swords were carried in sheathes of a type similar to those seen among the Shan, formed of two pieces of bamboo held together by rattan bands woven around them. No one knows whether or not these weapons are native with the Karen. They may have been copied from the Shan. Besides the three kinds of swords, the Karen used a long knife ("dah") for both defensive and offensive purposes, which is devoted nowadays to domestic employment.[4]

During the sixteenth century the Portuguese carried on an extensive trade in firearms in the East, especially in Burma. In this way the Karen tribes became familiar with flint-lock and match-lock guns, owning numbers of them. In numerous instances the stock of the gun had no butt to be held against the shoulder, as in the case of European and American guns, but a handle that was held against the cheek. Powder was "pounded out" in a mortar containing sulphur, saltpeter, and charcoal, all native products. The sulphur was often obtained from the deposits of bat dung found in the limestone caves that are numerous in the Moulmein district. Indeed, one of the common names for gun-powder was "bla-e," meaning bat dung. Inasmuch as lead mines have long been known in Burma and on the Chinese border, I presume that the Karen got the material for their bullets from these. When lead was not to be had, they substituted small round stones.

The approaches to the villages were guarded by burying sharpened bamboo spikes, hardened with fire, in the paths, leaving only the point protruding at a sufficient angle to catch the feet of the passer-by. These almost hidden spikes inflicted terrible wounds in

[3] For the weapons used in hunting see pp. 184, ff.
[4] *Karen Thesaurus*, Vol. III, 134; Cross, *Karen-English Dictionary*, 207.

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the bare feet of the enemy who was careless enough to run into them.

In the early times the participants in a foray equipped themselves with armor and shields, although such protective contrivances are almost unknown at the present time. The armor was a sort of jacket of thick hides thought to be serviceable in warding off the strokes and thrusts of sword and spear. The name by which it was known was "t' xo." Shields, called "k' taw," were constructed of wood and covered with a tough skin. I have not been able to learn from any one what was their shape or just how they were made. However, Mr. F. H. Gates, the political officer of Karenni, gives us this bit of information on the subject: "A generation or two back these people carried a shield made of plank covered with buffalo hide and studded with brass nails." He adds that no specimens of these shields are to be obtained now.[5]

[5] *Report* of 1894-95, p. 22.

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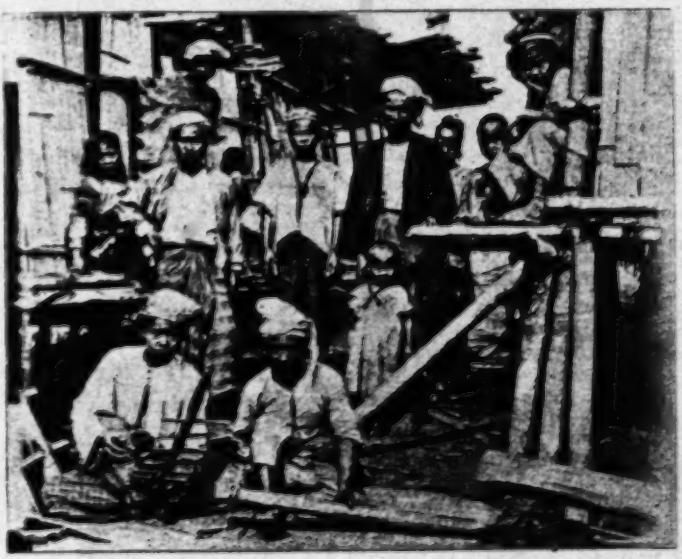

A Sgaw Karen Orchestra, Thabawaddy Hills
The harp and the guitar are being played together.